



Activity: Poe-try Workshop: Romantic Acrostics
Intended Grade/Audience: 4th-5th

<u>Overview of the Activity:</u> This <i>poetry workshop</i> will introduce students to identifying romantic imagery, figurative language, and rhyme scheme within Edgar Allan Poe’s acrostic poetry. Students will then apply what they’ve learned to create their own romantic acrostics.	<u>Activity Goals:</u> 1. Students will be introduced to Edgar Allan Poe to create a lasting interest and appreciation for his literature. 2. Students will strengthen their reading comprehension and will use context clues to understand the poems. 3. Students will strengthen their creative writing skills by writing acrostic poems. 4. Students will identify figurative language, rhyme scheme, and imagery within the poems.	<u>Activity Time:</u> 35 minutes • “An Acrostic” reading and workshop (15 min) • “A Valentine” reading and workshop (15 min) • Conclusion/present (5 min)
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<u>Virginia SOLs addressed and/or met:</u> For 4th grade: • Reading - 4.5 The student will read and demonstrate comprehension of fictional texts, literary nonfiction texts, and poetry. • Writing - 4.7 The student will write in a variety of forms to include narrative, descriptive, opinion, and expository. • Writing - 4.8 The student will self- and peer-edit writing for capitalization, spelling, punctuation, sentence structure, paragraphing, and Standard English. For 5th grade: • Reading - 5.5 The student will read and demonstrate comprehension of fictional texts, literary nonfiction, and poetry. • Writing - 5.7 The student will write in a variety of forms to include narrative, descriptive, expository, and persuasive. • Writing - 5.8 The student will self- and peer-edit writing for capitalization, spelling, punctuation, sentence structure, paragraphing, and Standard English.
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Directions: Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849) is an American poet and writer. You will read two acrostic poems by Edgar Allan Poe. An acrostic is a type of poem where the first letters of each line spell out a word or name. Read “An Acrostic” (1829) by Edgar Allan Poe both out loud and in your head. Then, answer the guiding questions below.

“Elizabeth it is in vain you say
‘Love not’ — thou sayest it in so sweet a way:
In vain those words from thee or L.E.L.
Zantippe's talents had enforced so well:
Ah! if that language from thy heart arise,
Breath it less gently forth — and veil thine eyes.
Endymion, recollect, when Luna tried
To cure his love — was cured of all beside —
His follie — pride — and passion — for he died.”

1. What word or name is spelled out in this poem?
2. What is the rhyme scheme of the poem?
3. What do you think this poem is about? If you are unsure, write down the emotions this poem makes you feel.

Directions: Now that you have identified the hidden name in the poem, you are going to rewrite Poe’s poem. The first two lines will remain the same, however, you will add the remaining 7 lines by keeping the same rhyme scheme and starting letter. Include one example of romantic imagery and one example of figurative language.

Elizabeth it is in vain you say
‘Love not’ — thou sayest it in so sweet a way:
I
Z
A
B
E
T
H

Directions: Read the following poem, “A Valentine” (1846) by Edgar Allan Poe. This is also an acrostic poem, but the name used in the acrostic is hidden. See if you can find it!

For her these lines are penned, whose luminous eyes,
Bright and expressive as the stars of Leda,
Shall find her own sweet name that, nestling, lies
Upon this page, enwrapped from every reader.
Search narrowly these words, which hold a treasure
Divine—a talisman—an amulet
That must be worn at heart. Search well the measure—
The words—the letters themselves. Do not forget
The smallest point, or you may lose your labor.
And yet there is in this no Gordian knot,
Which one might not undo without a sabre.
If one could merely comprehend the plot
Upon the open page, on which are peering
Such sweet eyes now, there lies, I say perdu,
A musical name, oft uttered in the hearing
Of poets, by poets—for the name is a poet’s, too,
In common sequence set, the letters lying,
Compose a sound delighting all to hear.
Ah, this you’d have no trouble in descrying,
Were you not something, of a dunce, my dear:
And now I leave these riddles to their seer.

1. There are instructions written in the poem detailing how to find the hidden message. What is the name or word hidden in the poem? (Hint: look at the first letter of the first line, the second letter of the second line, etc.)
 2. What is the rhyme scheme of this poem?
 3. Who is the speaker of this poem? Who might this poem be written for?
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Directions: You will write your own acrostic poem. Just like Poe, consider writing this poem to someone you love or care about. Choose either a traditional acrostic (like “An Acrostic”) or an advanced acrostic (like “A Valentine”). Answer the following questions to plan your poem. Be sure to include figurative language and imagery in your poem.

1. What word or name are you using for the acrostic?
2. What rhyme scheme do you want to use?
3. What kind of imagery do you want to use? What emotions will it invoke?
4. What types of figurative language will you use? Name at least two.

Write: Write your acrostic here.