

Literary Element (page 56)

Mood

The Cask of Amontillado EDGAR ALLAN POE

The mood of a story has a lot to do with how you feel as you read it. The author creates the mood by describing a setting with a certain atmosphere and by using language, tone, and rhythm that give a certain feel.

The mood of Poe’s “The Cask of Amontillado” is usually perceived as threatening, suspenseful, ominous. The threatening mood can be felt in Montresor’s words early in the story: “I continued as was my wont, to smile in his face, and he did not perceive that my smile *now* was at the thought of his immolation.” That he can smile at his enemy while imagining his death sets up a mood, or feeling, of something dark or evil hidden beneath the surface.

ACTIVITY

Directions In the first column, list story details that contribute to the mood of Poe’s story. In the second column, identify the mood or feeling the details help create and tell why you think so. The first row below gives an example from where Montresor encounters Fortunato in the street.

Story Details	Mood Created
“ . . . about dusk. . . during the extreme madness of the carnival season. . . he had been drinking much. . . wore motley. . . ”	The dusk signals that darkness is coming. There seems to be a mood of danger because Fortunato is drunk and dressed like a clown or jester; he is unprepared to deal with dark events.
1.	2.
3.	4.
5.	6.

Reading Strategy (page 56)

Paraphrasing

The Cask of Amontillado EDGAR ALLAN POE

When you paraphrase, you put something in your own words. You restate the idea, usually more simply than it was originally stated. You might use simpler vocabulary, and you can use a different—easier or more straightforward—word order in your sentences.

ACTIVITY

Directions Choose passages from the story. Write the words exactly as they appear in the story in the first column. Then write your paraphrase in the second column. The first entry from the story is supplied. Use a dictionary for help whenever you need it.

Story Passage	My Paraphrase
<p>“I continued, as was my wont, to smile in his face, and he did not perceive that my smile <i>now</i> was at the thought of his immolation.”</p>	<p>1.</p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>3.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>5.</p>

Active Reading Graphic Organizer

Continue choosing passages from the story and paraphrasing them. Use a Two-Column Table Graphic Organizer. (Ask your teacher for a copy.)

Selection Vocabulary Practice (page 56)

The Cask of Amontillado EDGAR ALLAN POE

VOCABULARY

- preclude** *v.* to prevent; make impossible
impunity *n.* freedom from punishment, harm, or bad consequences
accost *v.* to approach and speak to, especially in an aggressive manner
explicit *adj.* definitely stated, clearly expressed
implore *v.* to ask earnestly; beg

EXERCISE A Practice with Context Clues

Read this story about a family whose Aunt Ginny has made some terrible-looking dessert to share with everyone. Complete the story by choosing the vocabulary word that best fits in each context sentence. Think about meaning and part of speech to make your choice.

1. “Yuck,” I said. I felt that with a response that _____, everyone would understand that I was not eating Aunt Ginny’s dessert.
2. My little brother begged, “Please don’t make me eat that, I _____ you!”
3. Our Dad, in a voice filled with panic, said, “Aunt Ginny will come back soon and _____ us, demanding that we try that dessert.”
4. I watched as he started down to the basement to _____ having to eat the ugly mess.
5. Inspired, I said, “I have to clean my room, “ and I escaped with _____!

EXERCISE B Applying Meanings

If the vocabulary words could read, each of them might recommend one of the following how-to books. Write the word beside its favorite how-to book.

1. *How to Be Outspoken and Direct* _____
2. *How to Plead for Help Effectively* _____
3. *How to Walk Right Up to Anyone and Say What You Want to Say* _____
4. *How to Stand in the Way of Other People’s Plans* _____
5. *How to Avoid Judgments, Jails, Jeopardy, and Jams* _____

EXERCISE C Responding to the Selection

On the back of this sheet, write the text for a wanted poster describing Montresor. Summarize his crime and provide details regarding his physical appearance to help the public recognize and capture him. Use at least THREE vocabulary words.