

# The Tell Tale Heart

---

The Narrator

# What is a narrator?

A narrator is a person who **tells a story**. A story's narrator may be a character in the story. Another type of narrator is outside the story and observes and reports on the action that takes place. We rely on a story's narrator to let us know what is going on. But what if the narrator can't be trusted?

First (I, we)

Second (your, yours)

Third (He, she, they)

Limited

Omniscient

# What do we KNOW about our narrator?

Make a list of everything you know about the narrator.

Support these **facts** with details from the text.

What can we IMPLY about our narrator?

Make a list of everything that you can imply about our narrator.

Write down quotes from the text to support your **perceptions**.

On the following slides are a list of statements about the narrator.

- Your task is to decide if you agree or disagree with the statement.
- Make sure you support your answer with quotes from the text.

**The narrator does not know the difference between the  
'real' or the 'unreal' world.**

1. Decide if you agree or disagree.
2. Support your response with at least one quote from the text.

## **The narrator is able to form a specific plan.**

1. Decide if you agree or disagree.
2. Support your response with at least one quote from the text.

## **The narrator is obviously deranged.**

1. Decide if you agree or disagree.
2. Support your response with at least one quote from the text.

# Direct Address to the Reader

The narrator directly addresses the reader using the **pronoun** 'you'.

Why would Poe (the author) use language in this manner?  
What impact does it have on our experience of the narrator  
and their story?

# Anaphora

New language feature time! Meet ‘anaphora’, a useful little device which involves repeated words or phrases at the beginning of a sentence or a clause.

**“I heard** all things in the heaven and in the earth. **I heard** many things in hell.”

“With what caution—with what foresight, with what dissimulation, I went to work!”

“He had been trying to fancy them causeless, but could not. He had been saying to himself..”

**What is the impact of this device? What effect does it have on the reader and our understanding of the narrator?**

# The Unreliable Gothic Narrator

One of the devices which characterizes the gothic genre is the presence of an unreliable narrator.

Explore the ways which we could class this narrator as 'unreliable'. Use quotes from the text to support your observations.

Consider why Poe has made the choice to craft this narrator as 'unreliable'. What does it bring to the text?