

# Aula 5

## EDGAR ALLAN POE

### **META**

Apresentar a biografia de Edgar Allan Poe, relacionando-a com sua obra, na tentativa de demonstrar sua importância histórica.

### **OBJETIVOS**

Ao final desta aula, o aluno deverá:

- Compreender as condições de produção, circulação e recepção da obra de Poe em seu contexto;
- Reconhecer e identificar os aspectos inovadores e modelares da obra de Poe, bem como sua importância para o Romantismo como movimento literário.

### **PRÉ-REQUISITOS**

Familiaridade com os períodos formativos da literatura inglesa;  
Conceitos-chave da Teoria da Literatura e da história literária.

**Luiz Eduardo Oliveira**

### INTRODUÇÃO

Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849), nowadays, is an iconic writer. Loved and admired by generations of readers all around the world, the author of “The Black Cat” is still the object of many academic studies and researches, as well as a permanent reference to such different groups of people, such as musicians, painters, actors and actresses, editors and, of course, literary critics. He is best known for his poetry and tales of mystery and the macabre and is held as the precursor of detective and science fiction. His most famous poem, “The Raven”, translated into almost all the languages, has been adapted to movie versions and is still an important piece for the study of literary theory, once the author himself exposed in details, in one of his essays, the way how he could “create” or invent the poem, describing the technical strategies he used to-reach what he had planned. It is important to say that he was the first North-American writer to try to make a living out of writing, resulting in a financial difficulties through his life and career.

### DESENVOLVIMENTO



Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849). Fonte: [https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edgar\\_Allan\\_Poe](https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edgar_Allan_Poe)

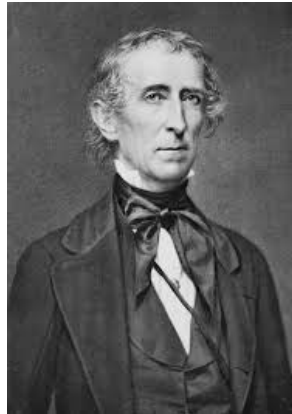
Poe was born in Boston, being the second child of two actors. His father abandoned the family and his mother died one year later. He was raised by the couple John and Frances Allan, of Richmond, Virginia. He attended the University of Virginia for one semester but had to leave because he couldn't pay it. He then enlisted in the Army in 1827. It was during this period that his literary career began, with an anonymous collection of poems published in the same year entitled *Tamerlane and Other Poems* (1827). After failing as an officer cadet at West Point, he decided to be a poet and writer.

To make a living out of writing, Poe spent the next years working for literary journals and periodicals, what gave him some notoriety, especially for his style of literary criticism. He lived in many different cities, such as Baltimore, Philadelphia and New York City. In Richmond he married his 13-year-old cousin, Virginia Clemm, in 1836. In 1845 he published “The Raven”, which became a great success to instant success. Two years later, his wife died of tuberculosis. For years, he planned to produce himself his own journal, *The Penn* (and then *The Stylus*), but he died before it could be published. Edgar Allan Poe died in Baltimore, on October 7th, 1849, at age 40. The cause of his death is still unknown, but most of his biographers attribute it to alcohol, brain congestion, drugs, heart disease and even suicide, among other causes. Becoming an icon, Poe’s work appear in popular culture, literature, music, films and television.

When his brother William Henry Leonard Poe died, in 1831, and Edgar began his attempts to start his career, there was no international copyright law. As a result, the publishers and then the editors used to produce unauthorized copies of literary works, leaving the authors without money. This happened to Poe, but also to many important writers in other parts of the world, like Machado de Assis, at the end of the century, in Brasil.

After his early poetic attempts, he began to concentrate on prose, publishing his first short stories in the many operiodicals of the time. When *The Baltimore Saturday Visiter* awarded him a prize in 1833 for his short story “MS. Found in a Bottle”, John P. Kennedy, a rich Baltimorean, helped Poe to publish some more stories, introducing him to Thomas W. White, the editor of the *Southern Literary Messenger*, in Richmond. Then Poe became assistant editor of the periodical in 1835, being discharged for having been caught drunk by his boss. An interesting detail: in the first month of his job. But he was reinstated by the editor, after promising good behavior, and remained at the *Messenger* until 1837. During this period, he published several poems, book reviews, critiques, and short stories in the paper.

His only novel, *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket*, was published and widely reviewed in 1838. In 1839, he became assistant editor of *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine*. In this year, he published articles, tales and reviews, making known his reputation as a literary critic, especially with his article for *The Southern Literary Messenger*. It was also during this year that the great collection *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque* was published in two volumes. The following year, he announced his intentions to start his own journal, *The Stylus* (previously called *The Penn*). During this period, around 1845 more or less, he tried to be a politician, attempting a position with the **Tyler** administration, once he hoped to be appointed to the Custom House in Philadelphia with the help from the President’s son, Robert, whom he knew through a common friend called Frederick Thomas, but his plans were frustrated. Poe spent the last years of his life in this small cottage in Fordham, a place now known as the Bronx.



John Tyler (1790-1862) was the tenth President of the United States from 1841 to 1845. He was also, briefly, the tenth Vice President (1841), elected to that office on the 1840 Whig ticket with William Henry Harrison. Tyler became president after Harrison's death in April 1841, only a month after the start of the new administration. Known to that point as a supporter of states' rights, which endeared him to his fellow Virginians, his actions as president showed that he was willing to back nationalist policies as long as they did not infringe on the powers of the states. A firm believer in manifest destiny, President Tyler sought to strengthen and preserve the Union through territorial expansion, most notably the annexation of Texas (which was brought to fruition by Tyler's successor, James K. Polk). Fonte [http://familypedia.wikia.com/wiki/John\\_Tyler\\_\(1790-1862\)/biography](http://familypedia.wikia.com/wiki/John_Tyler_(1790-1862)/biography)

Poe's best known literary pieces are Gothic, a genre that he followed to appease the public taste, due to its popularity, which came from the previous century with British authors. He was a severe critic of the literary movement known as **transcendentalism (1)**, ridiculing their writings as "metaphor-run mad" or "obscurity for obscurity's sake". He also wrote satires and humor tales and kind of invented science fiction, being a live testimony of the emerging technologies of the time.

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Besides being one of the first writers to create a theory for the short-stories, the theory of the "single effect", his main contribution to literary theory lies in his description of his method of composition, an essay entitled "The Philosophy of Composition". Here he tries to demystify the transcendental inspiration of the poets claiming that he followed strictly the plan he plotted to write the poem. The essay is held as an ingenious and rational exercise in the composition of poems".

During his lifetime, Poe was recognized as a literary critic. He won his reputation after his criticism on Boston's acclaimed poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, in what became known as "The Longfellow War". Poe accused him of "the heresy of the didactic", writing a poetry which was "preachy, derivative and thematically plagiarized". His fame as a writer, however, came from France. After his death, when his writings were translated to other languages, he became one of the first North-American authors of the 19th century to become more popular in Europe than in the United States. His fame was due to the translations by translations by Charles Baudelaire, who became his great admirer.



Charles Pierre Baudelaire (1821-1867) was a French poet who also produced notable work as an essayist, art critic, and pioneering translator of Edgar Allan Poe. Fonte: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles\\_Baudelaire](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Baudelaire)

But Poe had other talents. In *Eureka: A Prose Poem*, an essay written in 1848, he wrote an incredible cosmological theory that presaged the Big Bang theory by, at least, 80 years, although the essay is full of scientific errors. He ignored Newtonian principles regarding the density and rotation of planets, for example. He also had a keen interest in cryptography. **William Friedman**, a very famous North-American cryptologist, was strongly influenced by Poe. His tale “The Gold-Bug” is a good example of that interest.



William Frederick Friedman (1891-1969) was a US Army cryptographer who ran the research division of the Army's Signal Intelligence Service (SIS) in the 1930s, and parts of its follow-on services into the 1950s. In 1940, subordinates of his led by Frank Rowlett broke Japan's PURPLE cipher, thus disclosing Japanese diplomatic secrets before America's entrance into World War II. Fonte: <http://www.datuopinion.com/william-f-friedman>

## THE BLACK CAT (A TALE BY POE)

For the most wild, yet most homely narrative which I am about to pen, I neither expect nor solicit belief. Mad indeed would I be to expect it, in a case where my very senses reject their own evidence. Yet, mad am I not — and very surely do I not dream. But to-morrow I die, and to-day I would unburthen my soul. My immediate purpose is to place before the world, plainly, succinctly, and without comment, a series of mere household events. In their consequences, these events have terrified — have tortured — have destroyed me. Yet I will not attempt to expound them. To me, they have presented little but Horror — to many they will seem less terrible than barroques. Hereafter, perhaps, some intellect may be found which will reduce my phantasm to the common-place — some intellectual, more logical, and far less excitable than my own, which will perceive, in the circumstances I detail with awe, nothing more than an ordinary succession of very natural causes and effects.

From my infancy I was noted for the docility and humanity of my disposition. My tenderness of heart was even so conspicuous as to make me the jest of my companions. I was especially fond of animals, and was indulged by my parents with a great variety of pets. With these I spent most of my time, and never was so happy as when feeding and caressing them. This peculiarity of character grew with my growth, and, in my manhood, I derived from it one of my principal sources of pleasure. To those who have cherished an affection for a faithful and sagacious dog, I need hardly be at the trouble of explaining the nature or the intensity of the gratification thus derivable. There is something in the unselfish and self-sacrificing love of a brute, which goes directly to the heart of him who has had frequent occasion to test the paltry friendship and gossamer fidelity of mere Man.

I married early, and was happy to find in my wife a disposition not uncongenial with my own. Observing my partiality for domestic pets, she lost no opportunity of procuring those of the most agreeable kind. We had birds, gold-fish, a fine dog, rabbits, a small monkey, and a cat.

This latter was a remarkably large and beautiful animal, entirely black, and sagacious to an astonishing degree. In speaking of his intelligence, my wife, who at heart was not a little tinctured with superstition, made frequent allusion to the ancient popular notion, which regarded all black cats as witches in disguise. Not that she was ever serious upon this point — and I mention the matter at all for no better reason than that it happens, just now, to be remembered.

Pluto — this was the cat's name — was my favorite pet and playmate. I alone fed him, and he attended me wherever I went about the house. It was even with difficulty that I could prevent him from following me through the streets.

Our friendship lasted, in this manner, for several years, during which my general temperament and character — through the instrumentality of the Fiend Intemperance — had (I blush to confess it) experienced a radical alteration for the worse. I grew, day by day, more moody, more irritable, more regardless of the feelings of others. I suffered myself to use intemperate language to my wife. At length, I even offered her personal violence. My pets, of course, were made to feel the change in my disposition. I not only neglected, but ill-used them. For Pluto, however, I still retained sufficient regard to restrain me from maltreating him, as I made no scruple of maltreating the rabbits, the monkey, or even the dog, when by accident, or through affection, they came in my way. But my disease grew upon me — for what disease is like Alcohol! — and at length even Pluto, who was now becoming old, and consequently somewhat peevish — even Pluto began to experience the effects of my ill temper.

One night, returning home, much intoxicated, from one of my haunts about town, I fancied that the cat avoided my presence. I seized him; when, in his fright at my violence, he inflicted a slight wound upon my hand with his teeth.

The fury of a demon instantly possessed me. I knew myself no longer.

My original soul seemed, at once, to take its flight from my body; and a more than fiendish malevolence, gin-nurtured, thrilled every fibre of my frame. I took from my waistcoat-pocket a pen-knife, opened it, grasped the poor beast by the throat, and deliberately cut one of its eyes from the socket! I blush, I burn, I shudder, while I pen the damnable atrocity.

When reason returned with the morning — when I had slept off the fumes of the night's debauch — I experienced a sentiment half of horror, half of remorse, for the crime of which I had been guilty; but it was, at best, a feeble and equivocal feeling, and the soul remained untouched. I again plunged into excess, and soon drowned in wine all memory of the deed.

In the meantime the cat slowly recovered. The socket of the lost eye presented, it is true, a frightful appearance, but he no longer appeared to suffer any pain. He went about the house as usual, but, as might be expected, fled in extreme terror at my approach. I had so much of my old heart left, as to be at first grieved by this evident dislike on the part of a creature which had once so loved me. But this feeling soon gave place to

irritation. And then came, as if to my final and irrevocable overthrow, the spirit of Perverseness. Of this spirit philosophy takes no account. Yet I am not more sure that my soul lives, than I am that perverseness is one of the primitive impulses of the human heart — one of the indivisible primary faculties, or sentiments, which give direction to the character of Man. Who has not, a hundred times, found himself committing a vile or a silly action, for no other reason than because he knows he should not? Have we not a perpetual inclination, in the teeth of our best judgment, to violate that which is Law, merely because we understand it to be such? This spirit of perverseness, I say, came to my final overthrow. It was this unfathomable longing of the soul to vex itself — to offer violence to its own nature — to do wrong for the wrong's sake only — that urged me to continue and finally to consummate the injury I had inflicted upon the unoffending brute. One morning, in cool blood, I slipped a noose about its neck and hung it to the limb of a tree; — hung it with the tears streaming from my eyes, and with the bitterest remorse at my heart; — hung it because I knew that it had loved me, and because I felt it had given me no reason of offence; — hung it because I knew that in so doing I was committing a sin — a deadly sin that would jeopardize my immortal soul as to place it — if such a thing were possible — even beyond the reach of the infinite mercy of the Most Merciful and Most Terrible God.

On the night of the day on which this cruel deed was done, I was aroused from sleep by the cry of fire. The curtains of my bed were in flames. The whole house was blazing. It was with great difficulty that my wife, a servant, and myself, made our escape from the conflagration. The destruction was complete. My entire worldly wealth was swallowed up, and I resigned myself thenceforward to despair.

I am above the weakness of seeking to establish a sequence of cause and effect, between the disaster and the atrocity. But I am detailing a chain of facts — and wish not to leave even a possible link imperfect. On the day succeeding the fire, I visited the ruins. The walls, with one exception, had fallen in. This exception was found in a compartment wall, not very thick, which stood about the middle of the house, and against which had rested the head of my bed. The plastering had here, in great measure, resisted the action of the fire — a fact which I attributed to its having been recently spread. About this wall a dense crowd were collected, and many persons seemed to be examining a particular portion of it with very minute and eager attention. The words "strange!" "singular!" and other similar expressions, excited my curiosity. I approached and saw, as if graven in bas-relief upon the white surface, the figure of a gigantic cat. The impression was given with an accuracy truly marvellous. There was a rope about the animal's neck.



When I first beheld this apparition — for I could scarcely regard it as less — my wonder and my terror were extreme. But at length reflection came to my aid. The cat, I remembered, had been hung in a garden adjacent to the house.

Upon the alarm of fire, this garden had been immediately filled by the crowd — by some one of whom the animal must have been cut from the tree and thrown, through an open window, into my chamber. This had probably been done with the view of arousing me from sleep. The falling of other walls had compressed the victim of my cruelty into the substance of the freshly-spread plaster; the time of which, with the flames, and the ammonia from the carcass, had then accomplished the portraiture as I saw it.

Although I thus readily accounted to my reason, if not altogether to my conscience, for the startling fact just detailed, it did not the less fail to make a deep impression upon my fancy. For months I could not rid myself of the phantasm of the cat; and, during this period, there came back into my spirit a half-sentiment that seemed, but was not, remorse. I went so far as to regret the loss of the animal, and to look about me, among the vile haunts which I now habitually frequented, for another pet of the same species, and of somewhat similar appearance, with which to supply its place.

One night as I sat, half stupified, in a den of more than infamy, my attention was suddenly drawn to some black object, reposing upon the head of one of the immense hogsheads of Gin, or of Rum, which constituted the chief furniture of the apartment. I had been looking steadily at the top of this hogshead for some minutes, and what now caused me surprise was the fact that I had not sooner perceived the object thereupon. I approached it, and touched it with my hand. It was a black cat — a very large one — fully as large as Pluto, and closely resembling him in every respect but one. Pluto had not a white hair upon any portion of his body; but this cat had a large, although indefinite splotch of white, covering nearly the whole region of the breast.

Upon my touching him, he immediately arose, purred loudly, rubbed against my hand, and appeared delighted with my notice. This, then, was the very creature of which I was in search. I at once offered to purchase it of the landlord; but this person made no claim to it — knew nothing of it — had never seen it before.

I continued my caresses, and, when I prepared to go home, the animal evinced a disposition to accompany me. I permitted it to do so; occasionally stooping and patting it as I proceeded. When it reached the house it domesticated itself at once, and became immediately a great favorite with my wife.

For my own part, I soon found a dislike to it arising within me. This was just the reverse of what I had anticipated; but — I know not how or why it was — its evident fondness for myself rather disgusted and annoyed. By slow degrees, these feelings of disgust and annoyance rose into the bitterness of hatred. I avoided the creature; a certain sense of shame, and the remembrance of my former deed of cruelty, preventing me from physically abusing it. I did not, for some weeks, strike, or otherwise violently ill use it; but gradually — very gradually — I came to look upon it with unutterable loathing, and to flee silently from its odious presence, as from the breath of a pestilence.

What added, no doubt, to my hatred of the beast, was the discovery, on the morning after I brought it home, that, like Pluto, it also had been deprived of one of its eyes. This circumstance, however, only endeared it to my wife, who, as I have already said, possessed, in a high degree, that humanity of feeling which had once been my distinguishing trait, and the source of many of my simplest and purest pleasures.

With my aversion to this cat, however, its partiality for myself seemed to increase. It followed my footsteps with a pertinacity which it would be difficult to make the reader comprehend. Whenever I sat, it would crouch beneath my chair, or spring upon my knees, covering me with its loathsome caresses. If I arose to walk it would get between my feet and thus nearly throw me down, or, fastening its long and sharp claws in my dress, clamber, in this manner, to my breast. At such times, although I longed to destroy it with a blow, I was yet withheld from so doing, partly by a memory of my former crime, but chiefly — let me confess it at once — by absolute dread of the beast.

This dread was not exactly a dread of physical evil — and yet I should be at a loss how otherwise to define it. I am almost ashamed to own — yes, even in this felon's eel I, I am almost ashamed to own — that the terror and horror with which the animal inspired me, had been heightened by one of the merest chimaeras it would be possible to conceive. My wife had called my attention, more than once, to the character of the mark of white hair, of which I have spoken, and which constituted the sole visible difference between the strange beast and the one I had destroyed. The reader will remember that this mark, although large, had been originally very indefinite; but, by slow degrees — [page 287:] degrees nearly imperceptible, and which for a long time my Reason struggled to reject as fanciful — it had, at length, assumed a rigorous distinctness of outline. It was now the representation of an object that I shudder to name — and for this, above all, I loathed, and dreaded, and would have rid myself of the monster had I dared — it was now, I say, the image of a hideous — of a ghastly thing

— of the Gallows! — oh, mournful and terrible engine of Horror and of Crime — of Agony and of Death!

And now was I indeed wretched beyond the wretchedness of mere Humanity. And a brute beast — whose fellow I had contemptuously destroyed — a brute beast to work out for me — for me a man, fashioned in the image of the High God — so much of insufferable woe! Alas! neither by day nor by night knew I the blessing of Rest any more! During the former the creature left me no moment alone; and, in the latter, I started, hourly, from dreams of unutterable fear, to find the hot breath of the thing upon my face, and its vast weight — an incarnate Night-Mare that I had no power to shake off — incumbent eternally upon my heart!

Beneath the pressure of torments such as these, the feeble remnant of the good within me succumbed. Evil thoughts became my sole intimates — the darkest and most evil of thoughts. The moodiness of my usual temper increased to hatred of all things and of all mankind; while, from the sudden, frequent, and ungovernable outbursts of a fury to which I now blindly abandoned myself, my uncomplaining wife, alas! was the most usual and the most patient of sufferers.

One day she accompanied me, upon some household errand, into the cellar of the old building which our poverty compelled us to inhabit. The cat foiled me down the steep stairs, and, nearly throwing me headlong, exasperated me to madness. Uplifting an axe, and forgetting, in my wrath, the childish dread which had hitherto stayed my hand, I aimed a blow at the animal which, of course, would have proved instantly fatal had it descended as I wished. But this blow was arrested by the hand of my wife. Goaded, by the interference, into a rage more than demoniacal, I withdrew my arm from her grasp and buried the axe in her brain. She fell dead upon the spot, without a groan.

This hideous murder accomplished, I set myself forthwith, and - [page 288:] with entire deliberation, to the task of concealing the body. I knew that I could not remove it from the house, either by day or by night, without the risk of being observed by the neighbors. Many projects entered my mind. At one period I thought of cutting the corpse into minute fragments, and destroying them by fire. At another, I resolved to dig a grave for it in the floor of the cellar. Again, I deliberated about casting it in the well in the yard — about packing it in a box, as if merchandized, with the usual arrangements, and so getting a porter to take it from the house. Finally I hit upon what I considered a far better expedient than either of these. I determined to wall it up in the cellar — as the monks of the middle ages are recorded to have walled up their victims.

For a purpose such as this the cellar was well adapted. Its walls were loosely constructed, and had lately been plastered throughout with a rough plaster, which the dampness of the atmosphere had prevented from hardening. Moreover, in one of the walls was a projection, caused by a false chimney, or fireplace, that had been filled up, and made to resemble the rest of the cellar. I made no doubt that I could readily displace the bricks at this point, insert the corpse, and wall the whole up as before, so that no eye could detect any thing suspicious.

And in this calculation I was not deceived. By means of a crow-bar I easily dislodged the bricks, and, having carefully deposited the body against the inner wall, I propped it in that position, while, with little trouble, I re-laid the whole structure as it originally stood. Having procured mortar, sand, and hair, with every possible precaution, I prepared a plaster which could not be distinguished from the old, and with this I very carefully went over the new brick-work. When I had finished, I felt satisfied that all was right. The wall did not present the slightest appearance of having been disturbed. The rubbish on the floor was picked up with the minutest care. I looked around triumphantly, and said to myself — "Here at least, then, my labor has not been in vain."

My next step was to look for the beast which had been the cause of so much wretchedness; for I had, at length, firmly resolved to put it to death. Had I been able to meet with it, at the moment, there could have been no doubt of its fate; but it appeared that the crafty animal had been alarmed at the violence of my previous anger, and forebore to present itself in my present mood. It is impossible to describe, or to imagine, the deep, the blissful sense of relief which the absence of the detested creature occasioned in my bosom. It did not make its appearance during the night — and thus for one night at least, since its introduction into the house, I soundly and tranquilly slept; aye, slept even with the burden of murder upon my soul!

The second and the third day passed, and still my tormentor came not.

Once again I breathed as a freeman. The monster, in terror, had fled the premises forever! I should behold it no more! My happiness was supreme! The guilt of my dark deed disturbed me but little. Some few inquiries had been made, but these had been readily answered. Even a search had been instituted — but of course nothing was to be discovered. I looked upon my future felicity as secured.

Upon the fourth day of the assassination, a party of the police came, very unexpectedly, into the house, and proceeded again to make rigorous investigation of the premises. Secure, however, in the inscrutability of my place of concealment, I felt no embarrassment whatever. The officers

bade me accompany them in their search. They left no nook or corner unexplored. At length, for the third or fourth time, they descended into the cellar. I quivered not in a muscle. My heart beat calmly as that of one who slumbers in innocence. I walked the cellar from end to end. I folded my arms upon my bosom, and roamed easily to and fro. The police were thoroughly satisfied and prepared to depart. The glee at my heart was too strong to be restrained. I burned to say if but one word, by way of triumph, and to render doubly sure their assurance of my guiltlessness.

"Gentlemen," I said at last, as the party ascended the steps, "I delight to have allayed your suspicions. I wish you all health, and a little more courtesy. By the bye, gentlemen, this — this is a very well constructed house." [In the rabid desire to say something easily, I scarcely knew what I uttered at all.] — "I may say an excellently well constructed house. These walls — are you going, gentlemen? — these walls are solidly put together," and here, through the mere phrenzy of bravado, I rapped heavily, with a cane which I held in my hand, upon that very portion of the brick-work behind which stood the corpse of the wife of my bosom.

But may God shield and deliver me from the fangs of the Arch-Fiend! No sooner had the reverberation of my blows sunk into silence, than I was answered by a voice from within the tomb! — by a cry, at first muffled and broken, like the sobbing of a child, and then quickly swelling into one long, loud, and continuous scream, utterly anomalous and inhuman — a howl — a wailing shriek, half of horror and half of triumph, such as might have arisen only out of hell, conjointly from the throats of the damned in their agony and of the demons that exult in the damnation.

Of my own thoughts it is folly to speak. Swooning, I staggered to the opposite wall. For one instant the party upon the stairs remained motionless, through extremity of terror and of awe. In the next, a dozen stout arms were toiling at the wall. It fell bodily. The corpse, already greatly decayed and clotted with gore, stood erect before the eyes of the spectators. Upon its head, with red extended mouth and solitary eye of fire, sat the hideous beast whose craft had seduced me into murder, and whose informing voice had consigned me to the hangman. I had walled the monster up within the tomb!

### CONCLUSÃO

Edgar Allan Poe was a master of using methods which were later picked up by modern and postmodern writers. To the Romantic Period he contributed with his Gothic style, bringing to the literature of his country the exploration of darker thoughts and themes. He also created the modern mystery and detective story with his short story “Murders in the Rue Morgue”. His poetry and tales always show narrators and characters who struggle with mental issues. In many ways, they served as an inspiration to some of the most impressive literary pieces of all times, becoming an icon to writers and readers around the world.

His stature as a major figure in world literature is based on his great tales, poems and critical theories, which established an influential structure to both poetry and fiction. Regarded as the creator of the modern short story, he was also the precursor the “art for art’s sake” movement and Symbolism in nineteenth-century European literature. Whereas earlier critics concentrated on moral or ideological issues, Poe focused on the specific topic such as style and construction. In his literary work, he demonstrated a complete command of language and technique, as well as a rich and inspired imagination. His poetry and short stories influenced the French Symbolists of the late nineteenth century, who, in turn, dictated the rules of modern literature. The importance of Poe transcends the North-American literature, reaching readers and writes of many different languages and countries.



### RESUMO

Edger Allan Poe was the first writer to start horror, death, and mystery into literature and poetry. He set higher standards of writing, as dark as his life may be. Born on January 19, 1809, in Boston, Massachusetts, his tales of mystery and horror gave birth to the modern detective story and many of his works, including “The Tell-Tale Heart” and “The Fall of the House of Usher” and “The Black Cat”, became literary classics. “The Raven”, published in 1845, is considered among the best-known poems in Western literature.



### ATIVIDADES

Leia cuidadosamente o conto “The Black Cat” e procure identificar as estratégias narrativas do narrador para criar o clima de mistério e terror que o conto sugere.

## COMENTÁRIO SOBRE AS ATIVIDADES

Esta atividade tem por finalidade principal familiarizar o(a) estudante com o texto literário de Edgar Allan Poe, tentando, fazer com que o aluno identifique elementos formais da narrativa, bem como a paradoxal analogia entre racionalidade e elementos sobrenaturais que o autor mobiliza.



## PRÓXIMA AULA

The Rise of Realism

## GLOSSÁRIO

(1) Transcendentalism is a philosophical and poetic movement that developed in the late 1820s and 1830s in the eastern United States. It arose as a reaction to or protest against the general state of intellectualism and spirituality at the time. The doctrine of the Unitarian church as taught at Harvard Divinity School was of particular interest.

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