

PLAY: *The Tell-Tale Heart* • SKILL: Understanding Mood, page 1 of 2

Thinking About Mood

Directions: Answer each question to help you identify the mood of *The Tell-Tale Heart*, and how the writer creates that mood. Below, we provide some words that describe mood; feel free to choose from our list or come up with your own words when answering the questions.

Words That Describe Mood

anxious	eerie	horrifying	lonely	sorrowful
bouncy	exciting	humorous	mellow	spooky
calm	freaky	inspiring	mysterious	suspenseful
celebratory	frightening	intense	nightmarish	tense
cheerful	frustrating	irritating	romantic	tragic
creepy	funny	joyous	sad	uneasy
dreamy	hopeful	lighthearted	scary	unnerving

ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Look at the illustrations on pages 11, 12, and 14. List two or three adjectives that describe the mood of each.

2. Now think about how the artist created that mood. Is it the colors she used? The style of the illustrations?

The subject matter? Particular details that she included or emphasized? Explain. _____

SCENE 1

3. Consider the following words and phrases from the Ravens' introduction:

zombie	candlelight	murder	gargoyles	man who lost his mind
vampires	bloodcurdling	morgues	graveyards	

What do these words and phrases have in common? _____

4. In some of the villain's lines, some or all of the words appear in capital letters. How does reading or hearing these lines make you feel? Why? _____

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SCENE 2

5. At what time of day do the events in this scene take place? _____

How does this affect the mood of the scene? _____

6. What sounds (other than regular speaking) occur in this scene? How do these sounds affect the mood?

7. What is the main event of this scene? _____

8. List two or three adjectives that describe the mood of this scene. _____

Now list at least three words or phrases in the scene that help create this mood. _____

SCENE 3

9. Consider what the police officers say and how they say it. How do they affect the mood of the scene?

Do they, for example, increase the terror, add a note of humor, or increase the tension? Explain. _____

10. What sounds (other than regular speaking) occur in this scene? How do these sounds affect the mood?

11. Describe the villain's state of mind during this scene. How does it change? _____

12. Does the tension increase or decrease during this scene? What causes it to increase or decrease?

13. Consider what the Ravens say and how they say it, in this scene and throughout the play. How do they affect the mood? Explain. _____

Now use your answers to help you respond to the prompt on page 15: What is the mood of *The Tell-Tale Heart*? How does the writer create that mood? That is, what images, words, ideas, or other details caused you to feel the way you felt? Write a paragraph explaining your answers. Write on the back of this page or on your own paper.