



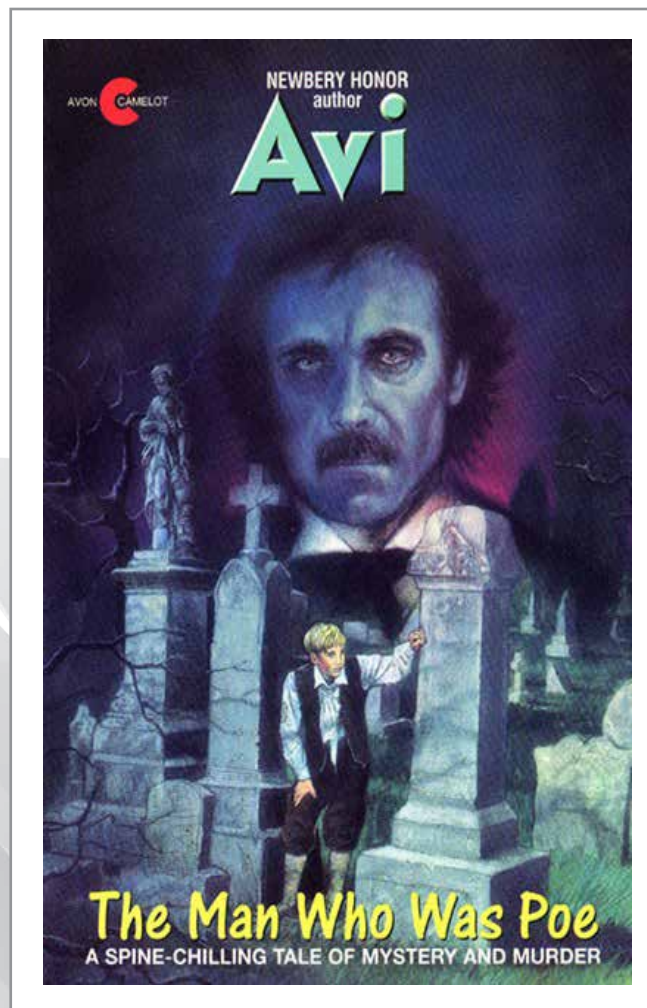
**TEACHER GUIDE**

**GRADES 6-8**

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

# The Man Who Was Poe

Avi



**READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT**

# The Man Who Was Poe

Avi

## TEACHER GUIDE

### NOTE:

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

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## Skills and Strategies

### Thinking

Identifying attributes,  
compare/contrast, research,  
decision-making, analysis  
evaluation, invention/design,  
brainstorming

### Comprehension

Predicting, summarizing,  
cause and effect, inference,  
main idea

### Writing

Character diary, story, story  
ending, definition, compare/  
contrast, character sketch,  
scene, poem, mystery,  
conversation, interview

### Vocabulary

Word wall, sentences,  
synonym match, vocabulary  
sort, vocabulary around the  
world, charades, word maps

### Listening/Speaking

Role playing, mock trial,  
story scene, guest speaker

### Literary Elements

Characterization, motive,  
plot, foreshadowing, point  
of view, theme

### Other

Map study, illustrations,  
flow chart, collage, book talk,  
scrapbook, board game,  
poster

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## Summary of *The Man Who Was Poe*

*The Man Who Was Poe* tells the story of a young boy named Edmund whose sister and aunt are both missing. Edmund solicits the help of Mr. Dupin (who is actually Edgar Allan Poe). Mr. Dupin tells Edmund that he will help him find his sister and aunt. However, the only reason that Mr. Dupin has offered his services is so that he might come up with a new story to write. Together Edmund and Mr. Dupin discover that Edmund's aunt has been murdered and that Sis is probably in danger. While Edmund believes that Mr. Dupin is trying to help, Dupin actually has a number of problems that he is trying to solve himself. While learning about Edmund, Mr. Dupin discovers that he and Edmund have led very similar lives. In the end, Edmund finds his sister, but without much help from Mr. Dupin, who destroys Edmund's story because he is not willing to let it end happily.

### About the Author

AVI is the author of many books for young people. He received a Christopher Award for *Encounter at Easton* and the Scott O'Dell Award for *The Fighting Ground*. He writes various types of novels, including mysteries, comedies, fantasies and historical novels.

AVI moved from Los Angeles to Providence, Rhode Island, in 1987. Providence is the setting for *The Man Who Was Poe*.

### Introductory Activities

1. **Previewing the book:** Have the students study the cover of the book. Ask them to respond to the following questions about what they see: who? what? where? when? why? Based on their answers, students predict what the novel will be about.
2. Given the following clues, students write a paragraph predicting what they think will happen in the story.

responsibility

determination

loyalty

family

destiny

3. **Character Diary:** Introduce the main character as Edmund. Let the students know that many things will happen to Edmund as they read through the novel. Ask the students to pretend that they are Edmund. After they finish reading each day, encourage them to make a diary entry from Edmund's perspective. At various times the students can share their diary entries with their classmates.
4. Create an attribute web (see page 10 of this guide) with students for each of the following ideas: responsibility, determination, loyalty, family, destiny. Focus on one word at a time. Begin by writing the word in the center of a large piece of paper. Ask students to quickly tell what each word brings to mind. Encourage students to elaborate on particular ideas.

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## Using Character Webs in the Novel Unit Approach

Attribute Webs are simply a visual representation of a character from the novel. They provide a systematic way for the students to organize and recap the information they have about a particular character. Attribute webs may be used after reading the novel to recapitulate information about a particular character, completed gradually as information unfolds, done individually, or finished as a group project.

One type of character attribute web uses these divisions:

- How a character acts and feels. (How does the character feel in this picture? How would you feel if this happened to you? How do you think the character feels?)
- How a character looks. (Close your eyes and picture the character. Describe him or her.)
- Where a character lives. (Where and when does the character live?)
- How others feel about the character. (How does another specific character feel about our character?)

In group discussion about the student attribute webs and specific characters, the teacher can ask for backup proof from the novel. You can also include inferential thinking.

Attribute webs need not be confined to characters. They may also be used to organize information about a concept, object, or place.

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## Chapters 17–19: pages 161-190

### Vocabulary

insinuate (161)	vicious (162)	obtainable (162)	intoned (163)
wager (164)	thwart (164)	confound (164)	essential (165)
incites (168)	deduce (168)	jeopardy (168)	alluded (170)
elaborate (172)	dismal (173)	murk (173)	hastened (173)
gentry (176)	conceived (177)	immense (182)	fascinated (182)
warily (183)	endeavoring (188)		

### Discussion Questions

1. Why does Mr. Dupin now insist on being called Poe? (*He feels he is back to his old self as a writer, since he now has this new story.*)
2. Why doesn't Mr. Poe want to go to the church with Edmund? (*He is no longer interested in helping Edmund; he now has enough information to write an excellent mystery.*)
3. Why is Poe going to have all the characters die in his story? (*He seems to prefer death over life.*)
4. Why do you think that Mum didn't try harder to find her children? (*Answers will vary.*)
5. Why didn't Mum go to the police about her situation? (*Answers will vary.*)
6. Why does Poe act as if Edmund is not a true person, but merely a character in his story? (*He is so absorbed in his writing and alcohol that he is beginning to confuse himself.*)
7. Why does Poe think that the characters are beginning to come to life? (*He can now see Edmund and his mother, and he doesn't seem to realize that his characters were based on these people.*)
8. Why would it make writing easier if the characters came to life? (*He can simply write what they do rather than trying to make it up himself.*)
9. Why does Edmund go to see Throck? (*He needs someone to help him find Sis, and Poe is no longer willing to help.*)
10. What do you think Throck and Poe are discussing? Do either one of them truly care about helping Edmund? (*Answers will vary.*)

### Supplementary Activities

1. **Compare/Contrast:** Give the students their papers with their solutions to the crimes. Ask them to compare/contrast their solution to the one Poe gives. Encourage them to determine which information they missed that Poe uses to solve the crimes. What other information did they need to reach the same conclusion as Poe?
2. **Flow Chart:** Poe explains how the crimes unfolded, but his explanation is very difficult to follow. Have students work in pairs to create a flow chart outlining the events of the crime. Encourage students to insert pictures and clues that might help their understanding.
3. **Analysis:** Poe talks about how his characters have come to life for him. Ask the students to consider what they call "true" writing. Is it creating one's own characters and events for a story? Or is it watching people and recording the actions and events in their lives? Which do students consider the true form of writing? Have students decide which of these forms Poe uses. Encourage students to share their ideas with classmates.