



Cobwebs and Cobblestones Story Stroll

Curriculum Booklet

Table of Contents

Before the Story Stroll

If Yellow Fever hit today... 3

During the Story Stroll

Questions to answer while on the Story Stroll 4

After the Story Stroll

Poe

Background and “The Tell-Tale Heart” 5-7

Questions for Discussion or Written Reflection 8

Yellow Fever

Personal Reflection 9

“Pestilence”: Background and Poem 10

“Pestilence”: Questions for Discussion or Written Reflection 11

Yellow Fever and Race 12-14

During the Story Stroll

Benjamin Franklin:

- Donated funds to help build the _____
- Is buried at _____
- Gave a paper about the Virginia 1741 Yellow Fever outbreak to _____
- Was the publisher for Benjamin Lay's pamphlets about the evils of _____
- Organized a lottery to raise money to build _____

"Phlebotomy" is another word for _____.

Benjamin Rush was a signer of Declaration of Independence; convinced Thomas Paine to publish "Common Sense"; was a champion of the federal Constitution of 1787; and is also referred to as the "Father of American _____".

Benjamin Lay belonged to what religious faith? _____

Partly because of Lay's efforts, member of his religious faith resolved not to import or sell _____.

How many times was Betsy Ross married? _____

What business did she teach to her last husband? _____

How many times was she buried? _____

Why was she moved so much?

What was Margaret Mattson accused of in 1683? _____

How often did this happen in Pennsylvania? _____

Who presided over her trial? _____

He believed in _____ of religion and trial by _____. This is largely responsible for the verdict in Margaret Mattson's trial.

After the Story Stroll

Poe

While living in Philadelphia, Edgar Allen Poe experienced what is considered by many to be his most productive period. Writing in Philadelphia between 1838 and 1844 he completed “Murders in the Rue Morgue”, “The Pit and the Pendulum”, “The Tell-Tale Heart”, “The Black Cat”, “The Fall of the House of Usher”, “The Cask of Amontillado”, and numerous other timeless works.

Inspired by—of all things—a wall in the basement of his Philadelphia home, he penned “The Tell-Tale Heart”.

“The Tell-Tale Heart”

(Source: <http://www.eapoe.org/works/reading/pto43r1.htm>)

— —
 Art is long and Time is fleeting,
 And our hearts, though stout and brave,
 Still, like muffled drums, are beating
 Funeral marches to the grave.
Longfellow.
 — —

True! — nervous — very, very dreadfully nervous I had been, and am; but why will you say that I am mad? The disease had sharpened my senses — not destroyed — not dulled them. Above all was the sense of hearing acute. I heard all things in the heaven and in the earth. I heard many things in hell. How, then, am I mad? Hearken! and observe how healthily — how calmly I can tell you the whole story.

It is impossible to say how first the idea entered my brain; but once conceived, it haunted me day and night. Object there was none. Passion there was none. I loved the old man. He had never wronged me. He had never given me insult. For his gold I had no desire. I think it was his eye! — yes, it was this! One of his eyes resembled that of a vulture — a pale blue eye, with a film over it. Whenever it fell upon me, my blood ran cold; and so, by degrees — very gradually — I made up my mind to take the life of the old man, and thus rid myself of the eye forever.

Now this is the point. You fancy me mad. Madmen know nothing. But you should have seen me. You should have seen how wisely I proceeded — with what caution — with what foresight — with what dissimulation I went to work! I was never kinder to the old man than during the whole week before I killed him. And every night, about midnight, I turned the latch of his door and opened it — oh, so gently! And then, when I had made an opening sufficient for my head, I put in a dark lantern, all closed, closed, so that no light shone out, and then I thrust in my head. Oh, you would have laughed to see how cunningly I thrust it in! I moved it slowly — very, very slowly, so that I might not disturb the old man's sleep. It took me an hour to place my whole head within the opening so far that I could see him as he lay upon his bed. Ha! — would a madman have been so wise as this? And then, when my head was well in the room, I undid the lantern cautiously — oh, so cautiously — cautiously (for the hinges creaked) — I undid it just so much that a single thin ray fell upon the vulture eye. And this I did for seven long nights — every night just at midnight — but I found the eye always closed; and so it was impossible to do the work; for it was not the

old man who vexed me, but his Evil Eye. And every morning, when the day broke, I went boldly into the chamber, and spoke courageously to him, calling him by name in a hearty tone, and inquiring how he has passed the night. So you see he would have been a very profound old man, indeed, to suspect that every night, just at twelve, I looked in upon him while he slept.

Upon the eighth night I was more than usually cautious in opening the door. A watch's minute hand moves more quickly than did mine. Never, before that night, had I felt the extent of my own powers — of my sagacity. I could scarcely contain my feelings of triumph. To think that there I was, opening the door, little by little, and he not even to dream of my secret deeds or thoughts. I fairly chuckled at the idea; and perhaps he heard me; for he moved on the bed suddenly, as if startled. Now you may think that I drew back — but no. His room was as black as pitch with the thick darkness, (for the shutters were close fastened, through fear of robbers,) and so I knew that he could not see the opening of the door, and I kept pushing it on steadily, steadily.

I had my head in, and was about to open the lantern, when my thumb slipped upon the tin fastening, and the old man sprang up in bed, crying out — "Who's there?"

I kept quite still and said nothing. For a whole hour I did not move a muscle, and in the meantime I did not hear him lie down. He was still sitting up in the bed, listening; — just as I have done, night after night, hearkening to the death-watches in the wall.

Presently I heard a slight groan, and I knew that it was the groan of mortal terror. It was not a groan of pain, or of grief — oh, no! — it was the low, stifled sound that arises from the bottom of the soul when overcharged with awe. I knew the sound well. Many a night, just at midnight, when all the world slept, it has welled up from my own bosom, deepening, with its dreadful echo, the terrors that distracted me. I say I knew it well. I knew what the old man felt, and pitied him, although I chuckled at heart. I knew that he had been lying awake ever since the first slight noise, when he had turned in the bed. His fears had been ever since growing upon him. He had been trying to fancy them causeless, but could not. He had been saying to himself — "It is nothing but the wind in the chimney — it is only a mouse crossing the floor," or "it is merely a cricket which has made a single chirp." Yes, he has been trying to comfort himself with these suppositions; but he had found all in vain. All in vain; because Death, in approaching him had stalked with his black shadow before him, and enveloped the victim. And it was the mournful influence of the unperceived shadow that caused him to feel — although he neither saw nor heard me — to feel the presence of my head within the room.

When I had waited a long time, very patiently, without hearing him lie down, I resolved to open a little — a very, very little crevice in the lantern. So I opened it — you cannot imagine how stealthily, stealthily — until, at length, a single dim ray, like the thread of the spider, shot from out the crevice and fell upon the vulture eye.

It was open — wide, wide open — and I grew furious as I gazed upon it. I saw it with perfect distinctness — all a dull blue, with a hideous veil over it that chilled the very marrow in my bones; but I could see nothing else of the old man's face or person: for I had directed the ray as if by instinct, precisely upon the damned spot.

And now — have I not told you that what you mistake for madness is but over acuteness of the senses? — now, I say, there came to my ears a low, dull, quick sound, such as a watch makes when enveloped in cotton. I knew that sound well, too. It was the beating of the old man's heart. It increased my fury, as the beating of a drum stimulates the soldier into courage.

But even yet I refrained and kept still. I scarcely breathed. I held the lantern motionless. I tried how steadily I could maintain the ray upon the eye. Meantime the hellish tattoo of the heart increased. It grew quicker and quicker, and louder and louder every instant. The old man's terror must have been extreme! It grew louder, I say, louder every moment! — do you mark me well? I have told you that I am nervous: — so I am. And now, at the dead hour of the night, amid the dreadful silence of that old house, so strange a noise as this excited me to uncontrollable terror. Yet, for some minutes longer I refrained and stood still. But the beating grew louder, louder! I thought the heart must burst! And now a new anxiety seized me — the sound would be heard by a neighbor! The old man's hour had come! With a loud yell, I threw open the lantern and leaped into the room. He shrieked once — once only. In an instant I dragged him to the floor, and pulled the heavy bed over him. I then sat upon the bed and smiled gaily, to find the deed so far done. But, for many minutes, the heart beat on with a muffled sound. This, however, did not vex me; it would not be heard through the wall. At length it ceased. The old man was dead. I removed the bed and examined the corpse. Yes, he was stone, stone dead. I placed my hand upon the heart and held it there many minutes. There was no pulsation. He was stone dead. His eye would trouble me no more.

If still you think me mad, you will think so no longer when I describe the wise precautions I took for the concealment of the body. The night waned, and I worked hastily, but in silence. First of all I dismembered the corpse. I cut off the head and the arms and the legs. I then took up three planks from the flooring of the chamber, and deposited all between the scantlings. I then replaced the boards so cleverly, so cunningly, that no human eye — not even his — could have detected anything wrong. There was nothing to wash out — no stain of any kind — no blood-spot whatever. I had been too wary for that. A tub had caught all — ha! ha!

When I had made an end of these labors, it was four o'clock — still dark as midnight. As the bell sounded the hour, there came a knocking at the street door. I went down to open it with a light heart, — for what had I now to fear? There entered three men, who introduced themselves, with perfect suavity, as officers of the police. A shriek had been heard by a neighbor during the night; suspicion of foul play had been aroused; information had been lodged at the police office, and they (the officers) had been deputed to search the premises.

I smiled, — for what had I to fear? I bade the gentlemen welcome. The shriek, I said, was my own in a dream. The old man, I mentioned, was absent in the country. I took my visitors all over the house. I bade them search — search well. I led them, at length, to his chamber. I showed them his treasures, secure, undisturbed. In the enthusiasm of my confidence, I brought chairs into the room, and desired them here to rest from their fatigues; while I myself, in the wild audacity of my perfect triumph, placed my own seat upon the very spot beneath which reposed the corpse of the victim.

The officers were satisfied. My manner had convinced them. I was singularly at ease. They sat, and while I answered cheerily, they chatted of familiar things. But, ere long, I felt myself getting pale and wished them gone. My head ached, and I fancied a ringing in my ears: but still they sat and still chatted. The ringing became more distinct: — it continued and became more distinct: I talked more freely, to get rid of the feeling; but it continued and gained definiteness — until, at length, I found that the noise was not within my ears.

No doubt I now grew very pale; — but I talked more fluently, and with a heightened voice. Yet the sound increased — and what could I do? It was a low, dull, quick sound — much such a sound as a watch makes when enveloped in cotton. I gasped for breath — and yet the officers heard it not. I talked more quickly — more vehemently; — but the noise steadily increased. I arose, and argued about trifles, in a high key and with violent gesticulations; — but the noise steadily increased. Why would they not be gone? I paced the

floor to and fro, with heavy strides, as if excited to fury by the observations of the men; — but the noise steadily increased. Oh God! what could I do? I foamed — I raved — I swore! I swung the chair upon which I had been sitting, and grated it upon the boards, but the noise arose over all and continually increased. It grew louder — louder — louder! And still the men chatted pleasantly, and smiled. Was it possible they heard not? Almighty God! — no, no! They heard! — they suspected! — they knew! — they were making a mockery of my horror! — this I thought, and this I think. But anything was better than this agony! Anything was more tolerable than this derision! I could bear those hypocritical smiles no longer! I felt that I must scream or die! — and now — again! — hark! louder! louder! louder! louder! —

"Villains!" I shrieked, "dissemble no more! I admit the deed! — tear up the planks! — here, here! — it is the beating of his hideous heart!"

Questions for Discussion or Written Reflection

1. Can you relate to any of these characters at all? If so, which ones and how? If not, what separates you, from them?
2. Many suggest that the narrator is of ambiguous gender. If the narrator was a woman, would this impact the your interpretation? If so, how?
3. Did this story scare you? If so, what scared you the most? If not, what could have made it scary?
4. If this was a satire (a work critiquing certain aspects of society which the author thinks could use improvement), what might it be saying about American society in the 1840s?
5. The narrator's story is full of seemingly ridiculous statements. Which did you find the most ridiculous? Now, can you think of any information that, if known, would make the ridiculous statement seem reasonable?

“Pestilence”

When you met Mary Clarkson during your Story Stroll, she was reciting the words to a poem written at the height of the Yellow Fever outbreak in 1793. Below you will find some background about the poem and its author, the poem itself, and questions for discussion or written reflection.

When Philip Freneau published this poem he was already a noted poet. In 1791, under the patronage of Thomas Jefferson—then Washington's Secretary of State—he was appointed as a translator for the State Department. He quickly became embroiled in factionalist politics when he established *The National Gazette* a mouthpiece for Jefferson's brand of democracy. In the bi-weekly paper Freneau, along with James Madison and others, viciously attacked Washington and Hamilton's Federalist policies. Though Freneau was generally cautious in his direct criticisms of the president, he was less careful in his portrayals of Hamilton and John Adams. By the time he published the darkly comic "Pestilence" in 1793, Freneau was on shaky ground both politically and financially; Jefferson was leaving his post and Freneau had veered too far in supporting certain French diplomats. In addition, his poem was hardly well received; so in the fall of that year he had resigned from the State Department and closed his paper.

(Source: <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~ma96/forrest/ww/feverlit.html>)

Pestilence:

Written During the Prevalence of a Yellow Fever

Hot, dry winds forever blowing,
Dead men to the grave-yards going:
Constant hearses,
Funeral verses;
Oh! what plagues--there is no knowing!

Priests retreating from their pulpits!--
Some in hot, and some in cold fits
In bad temper,
Off they scamper,
Leaving us--unhappy culprits!

Doctors raving and disputing, death's pale army still recruiting--
What a pother
One with t'other!
Some a-writing, some a-shooting.

Nature's poisons here collected,
Water, earth, and air infected--
O, what a pity,
Such a City,
Was in such a place erected!

---Philip Freneau
Philadelphia, 1793

Questions for Discussion or Written Reflection

1. What is the rhyme scheme of this poem?
2. Where is alliteration used?
3. Do you think Freneau presents a positive or negative view of the clergy in Philadelphia during the Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1793? Where is this view expressed in the poem?
4. Do you think Freneau viewed Philadelphia's doctors in a positive or negative way? Where is this opinion presented in the poem? What individual did you learn on the Story Stroll to whom Freneau *might* be referring? What was this individual's most commonly used treatment?
5. Freneau opens and closes the poem by referencing nature. What do you think this says about the hopelessness and despair Philadelphians felt during the Fever?

Yellow Fever and Race

(Source: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part3/3p1590.html>)

The Yellow Fever Epidemic

Philadelphia's yellow fever epidemic of 1793 was the largest in the history of the United States, claiming the lives of nearly 5000 people. In late summer, as the number of deaths began to climb, 20,000 citizens fled to the countryside, including George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and other members of the federal government (at that time headquartered in Philadelphia).

At the urging of Benjamin Rush and Matthew Clarkson, the support of Philadelphia's free black community was enlisted by pastors Absalom Jones and Richard Allen, co-founders of the Free African Society.

In an effort to prove themselves morally superior to those who reviled them, Philadelphia's black community put aside their resentment and dedicated themselves to working with the sick and dying in all capacities, including as nurses, cart drivers, and grave diggers. Despite Rush's belief that blacks could not contract the disease, 240 of them died of the fever.

As the weather cooled, the disease subsided, and the deaths stopped. Then accusations began against the black citizens who had worked so hard to save the sick and dying. The attack was led by Mathew Carey, whose pamphlet attacked many in the black community. A response to the pamphlet was published by Richard Allen and Absalom Jones.

A Short Account of the Malignant Fever...

Soon after Philadelphia's Yellow Fever epidemic of 1793 subsided, accusations began against the black citizens who had worked so hard to save the sick and dying. Mathew Carey, who had fled the city when the disease hit, led the attack. In a widely distributed pamphlet (dated November 14, 1793), Carey accused the black community of profiteering from the disease, and of plundering the houses of the sick. Allen, Jones and Gray, he stated, acted nobly, but many of the other blacks had not.

Carey's pamphlet was extremely successful; by the time Richard Allen and Absalom Jones published a response ("A Narrative of the Proceedings of the Black People..."), Carey had already published a fourth edition.

A Narrative of the Proceedings of the Black People...

In a widely-read pamphlet distributed on the heels of the 1793 yellow fever epidemic, Philadelphia publisher Mathew Carey accused the black community of profiteering from the disease and of plundering the houses of the sick.

In response to Carey's libel against their community, which by then was already in a fourth edition, Richard Allen and Absalom Jones published *A Narrative of the Proceedings of the Black People, During the Late Awful Calamity in Philadelphia in the Year 1793 and a Refutation of Some Censures, Thrown upon them in some late Publications*.

They noted that "Mr. Carey's first, second and third editions... in all probability, have been read by thousands that will never read his fourth -- consequently, any alteration he may hereafter make... cannot

have the desired effect, or atone for the past; therefore we apprehend it necessary to publish our thoughts on the occasion.

The *Narrative* documented the courageous actions of the blacks who dedicated themselves to fighting the disease and included a meticulous accounting of payments and expenses.

It was also an indictment of both whites who fled the city -- including Carey himself -- and those who remained but turned their backs on the sick. Jones and Allen speculated that Carey had "made more money by the sale of his "scraps" than a dozen of the greatest extortioners among the black nurses."


Mortality

In their response to the charges leveled against Philadelphia's black community by Mathew Carey in the wake of the 1793 yellow fever epidemic, Absalom Jones and Richard Allen referred to a "bill of mortality" published at the end of the year by the clerks and sexton of Christ Church and St. Peter's Church

In addition to the baptisms and burials that took place at Christ Church and St. Peter's -- 214 of the latter due to yellow fever -- the broadside noted the number of burials among other congregations and denominations, including evidence that would "convince any reasonable man ... that as many coloured people died in proportion as others."

MORTALITY.

EACH human has its fate, amidst
Of man's enormous tribe, whole people prey,
Under empire from the east, each narrow prey



His life's weapon in the narrow space
Of breast and bowels' combat, and run down
The black bones of arbitrary fate.

An Account of the BAPTISMS AND BURIALS in the United Churches of Christ Church and St. Peter's,
by Matthew Whitehead and John Ormrod, Clerks; and Joseph Dolby, Sexton.
Also--An abstract of the Baptisms and Burials of the various Congregations of the City and Suburbs of
Philadelphia. From December 25, 1792, to December 25, 1795.

BAPTISMS		BURIALS		BURIALS INCREASED or DECREASED.	
Males, 74	Females, 65	Males, 218	Females, 370	Swedes 98	Increased 46
819		588		German Lutherans 224	Ditto 111
				The Friends 481	Ditto 203
				First Presbyterians 95	Ditto 18
				Second Do. 147	Ditto 16
				Third Do. 152	Ditto 105
				Scotch Do. 31	Ditto 7
				The African Church 15	Ditto 17
				Missionaries 18	Ditto 11
				Society of Free Quakers 41	Ditto 20
				Methodists 50	Ditto 20
				Baptists 87	Ditto 35
				Jews, or Hebrew Church 4	Ditto 3

Difference of Baptisms and Burials in Christ Church and St. Peter's between this year and last,

Baptisms decreased 41	Burials increased, 373
---------------------------------	----------------------------------

Died under one year, 21 From forty to fifty 27
From one to three 31 From fifty to sixty 21
to five 19 to sixty to eighty 10
to ten 26 to eighty to a hundred 7
to twenty 42 to a hundred to a hundred and five 1
to thirty 84
to forty 91

The Diseases and Causes in Christ Church and St. Peter's, this year.

Apoplexy, 1	Gravel, 1
Alliema, 1	Hoping Cough, 5
Bilious Fever, 2	Hives, 5
Cholic, 1	Morbillition, 2
Cancer, 3	Nervous Fever, 5
Childbed, 3	Old Age, 3
Consumption, 12	Purging and Vomiting, 9
Dry Gripes, 1	Palsy, 2
Dropsy, 9	Small-pox, 16
Diarrhoea, 44	Suddenly, 4
Fat, 17	Tooth and Worms, 10
Fever, 7	Warms, 6
Flux, 6	Yellow Fever, 214
Gout, 3	

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH.

Baptisms 143	Decreased 2	Burials 94	Increased 54
--------------	-------------	------------	--------------

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCHES.

ST. MARY'S, { Baptisms 315
 { Burials 370

HOLY TRINITY, { Baptisms 53
 { Burials 53

BAPTISMS INCREASED or DECREASED.

Swedes 42	Decreased 10
German Lutherans 200	Increased 66
Ditto Reformed 200	Decreased 1
First Presbyterians 45	Ditto 9
Second Do. 19	Ditto 25
Third Do. 60	Ditto 5
Scotch Do. 6	Decreased 1
The African Church 1	Ditto 6
Missionaries 50	Ditto 23
Methodists 5	Ditto 23
Jews, or Hebrew Church 4	

BURIALS IN THE STRANGER'S GROUND.

Whites 1639	Increased 574
Blacks 303	Ditto 339

BAPTISMS this Year, 1694 Decreased 131
BURIALS Ditto, 5394 Increased 3939

BURIALS IN THE GRAVE-YARDS, since the FIRST of AUGUST.

Christ Church and St. Peter's 229	Roman Catholics--St. Mary's 210
St. Paul's 77	Ditto Holy Trinity 10
Swedes 70	The African Church 18
German Lutherans 650	Missionaries 25
Ditto Reformed 253	Society of Free Quakers 25
The Friends 285	Methodists 25
First Presbyterians 78	Baptists 78
Second Do. 129	Scotism, 174
Third Do. 112	Jews or Hebrew Church 174
Scotch Do. 18	Stranger's Ground 1450
TOTAL since August 3019	

HOW many precious souls are sold
To the vain regions of the dead!
None in this day the changing line
Through the blood yearly period run.

We're far gone; but who can fly?
Till through this year, or month, or day,
= I shall create this vital breath,
= That far, at last, in legions with death.

This breath is thine, eternal God!
Tis thine to bless my soul's abode:
In health to live from thee above
On earth, or in the world unknown.

To thee our spirits we resign,
Make them and ours thine till no thine;
So shall they live secure from fear,
Though death should blot the rising year.

The children, waiting to be gone,
May bid the rite of these roll on,
T'wixt them on that happy shore,
Where years and toils are known no more.

No more fatigue, no more distress,
Nor let our hell shall reach that place,
No more to struggle with the long,
Retounding from immortal torments.

No more alarm from ghastly Gorg,
No more to break the long repose,
No midnight shade, no clouded fun,
But sweet High-crown'd repose.

O, long expected year! begin!
Ere on this world of care and sin,
Ere would we leave this wretched road,
To sleep in death, and roll with God.

