

The Black Cat and Other Stories

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While reading

The Black Cat, pages 1–11

1 Which of the words below describe the people or animals in the story?

bad brave clever evil friendly good
happy horrible kind loving selfish sick

- a The story-teller:
b The story-teller's wife:
c Pluto:
d The second cat:

2 Put these sentences in the correct order, 1–10.

The first half of the story: (1–5)

- a I searched for another black cat, of the same size and type as Pluto. ☐
b For years, he and I lived happily together, the best of friends. ☐
c I saw a black shape in the new white plaster. ☐
d I caught the cat and hung him by his neck from a tree until he was dead. ☐
e I took my knife from my pocket, held the poor animal by his neck and cut out one of his eyes. ☐

The second half of the story: (6–10)

- f And there was the cat, standing on her head, his red mouth wide open in a scream, and his one gold eye shining like fire. ☐
g But the more I hate the cat, the more he seemed to love me. ☐
h I knocked hard on the part of the wall where my wife was. ☐
i Pluto didn't have a white hair anywhere on his body; this cat had a large white shape on his front. ☐
j I took the axe and tried to cut the animal into two. But as I brought the axe down, my wife stopped my arm with her hand. ☐

The Oval Portrait, pages 13–17

3 Something is wrong in these sentences. Cross out the wrong part of the sentences and correct them.

- a It was a sad and strangely ugly house, many hundreds of years old.
b He helped me to lie down on the sofa.

- c I asked Pedro to light the candle beside the bed.
d I began to look at the maps on the walls, and as I did so I read a small book.
e The picture was a portrait. It was square in shape, and showed the head and shoulders of a young woman.

4 Choose the right answers.

- 1 What is strange about the portrait? ...
a The woman in the portrait looks beautiful.
b The woman in the portrait looks alive.
c The woman in the portrait moves around.
2 Why does the story-teller again pick up the book by his bed? ...
a Because he fell in love with the portrait.
b Because he didn't want to look at the portrait again.
c To read the story of the portrait.
3 Why did the beautiful woman hate her husband's paintings? ...
a Because her husband's paintings were more important to him than she was.
b Because her husband's paintings were more beautiful than she was.
c Because her husband's paintings made her unhealthy.
4 What happened to the woman when her husband was painting her? ...
a She couldn't smile any more.
b She became more and more pale and ill.
c All of the above.
5 What happened to the woman when her husband finished the portrait? ...
a She had no face.
b She didn't love her husband anymore.
c She was dead.

Berenice, pages 19–27

5 Are these sentences true (T) or not true (NT)?

- a Egeus is from an old family. ☐
b Egeus lives in the house of his fathers. ☐
c Egeus' father died in the library. ☐
d Egeus doesn't like the library. ☐
e Egeus has a friend called Berenice. ☐
f Berenice's bright young days ended because she became old. ☐

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- g Egaeus had an illness of the mind. ☐
- h Egaeus loved Berenice, but she never loved him. ☐
- i Berenice died of epilepsy. ☐

6 Answer these questions.

- a Why does Berenice change so much?
.....
- b What is wrong with Egaeus?
.....
- c Why does Egaeus ask Berenice to marry him?
.....
- d Why does Egaeus want Berenice's teeth?
.....
- e When does the servant girl tell Egaeus that Berenice is dead?
.....

The Mask of the Red Death, pages 29–36

7 Are these sentences right (✓) or wrong (X)?

- 1 If you have the Red Death:
- a you have burning pains in your eyes. ☐
- b everything begins to turn round and round inside your stomach. ☐
- c you begin to bleed all over your body – but most of all through your face. ☐
- d you have about half a year to live. ☐
- 2 The Prince's house in the middle of a forest has:
- a servants. ☐
- b a high wall around it. ☐
- c only seven rooms. ☐
- d a lot of keys. ☐
- 3 Each of the seven rooms has:
- a different furniture. ☐
- b lamps. ☐
- c a clock. ☐
- d windows the same colour as everything inside it. ☐
- 4 The seven rooms are different colours:
- a The first room is blue. ☐
- b The second room is pink. ☐
- c The third room is yellow. ☐
- d The fourth room is orange. ☐
- e The fifth room is white. ☐
- f The sixth room is green. ☐
- g The seventh room is black with grey windows. ☐

8 Choose the correct answer.

- 1 Why was everybody dressed so strangely at the party? ...
- a Because the Prince chose the way everyone was dressed.
- b Because the Prince was strange.
- c All of the above.
- 2 Why did people look at the tall masked man with anger and horror? ...
- a Because he was wearing black, which made them think of death.
- b Because he was wearing a red mask which looked like a dead man.
- c All of the above.
- 3 Who killed the Prince? ...
- a One of his friends.
- b One of the servants.
- c The tall masked man.
- 4 Why did everybody die? ...
- a Because they were very scared.
- b Because the Prince was killed.
- c Because the tall masked man was the Red Death.

After reading

9 Write a sentence using these words.

- a anger
.....
- b evil
.....
- c horror
.....
- d mad
.....

10 Write one more sentence to continue the story.

- a *The Black Cat*: The policemen looked at me.
.....
- b *The Oval Portrait*: When I finished reading the book, the portrait started to talk.
.....
- c *Berenice*: The servant called the police.
.....
- d *The Mask of the Red Death*: A hundred years later, someone came to this house.
.....

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- 1 **The Black Cat:** Complete each sentence with a word from the box. You can use the same word more than once.

angry	axe	cellar	evil	horror
mad	object	plaster	several	

- Some people believe that all black cats are
- I was often suddenly about unimportant things.
- Someone else was in my body: someone evil, and with drink!
- The next morning, my mind was full of pain and when I woke up.
- I realised why this wall didn't burn: because there was new on it.
- I looked at the shape in complete
- I noticed a black on top of a cupboard.
- The cat pressed the side of his head against my hand times.
- I took the and tried to cut the animal into two.
- I decided to hide the body in one of the walls of the

- 2 **The Oval Portrait:** Match the two parts of the sentences.

- I was so badly hurt ...
- After dark, I could not sleep ...
- I looked and read for a long time, and ...
- My eyes became more and more tired, and soon ...
- I saw more pictures, and ...
- It was almost impossible to believe ...
- Quickly, I looked through the book until ...
 - I found it hard to read the words on the page.
 - because of the pain.
 - I found the story of the oval portrait.
 - that she was just paint – that she wasn't alive!
 - that I would die if we stayed out all night.
 - among them there was a portrait of a young woman.
 - the hours passed quickly.

- 3 **Berenice:** Circle the correct words in *italics*.

- Egaeus' favourite room is the *library* / *sitting room*.
- Egaeus was born in the *library* / *richly decorated room*.
- Berenice and Egeus were *lovers* / *cousins*.
- Berenice was always shining like a *bright* / *evil* new sun when she was young.

- Berenice ran over the hills under the great blue sky while Egeus studied *at school* / *in the library*.
- Berenice became ill. The first illness caused *two* / *several* other illnesses to follow.
- Egeus became ill. He could lose himself in the useless study of even the simplest or most ordinary *subject* / *object*.
- Egeus asked Berenice to marry him because he *loved her* / *felt so sorry for her*.
- Egeus thought, 'Berenice was like *an angel* / *a stranger* to me, only a weak shadow of the woman I remembered.'
- Berenice made a strange smile, and it was then that Egeus saw her *eyes* / *teeth*.
- 'We are ready to *bury* / *burn* her now,' said the servant girl.
- Berenice wasn't *dead* / *alive*.

- 4 **The Mask of the Red Death:** Choose the right answers.

- What is the Red Death? ...
 - An old ship.
 - A terrible illness.
 - A small pub.
- Why did the prince take 1,000 friends to his house in the forest? ...
 - so that they could have a fight.
 - so that they could enjoy the walking in the forest and listening to the birds singing.
 - so that they could get away from the Red Death.
- Why did he throw the key into the lake? ...
 - so that nobody could get in or out of the house.
 - so that he would die in the house.
 - because he didn't like the key.
- What did the Prince want to do five months later? ...
 - He wanted to have an unusual party.
 - He wanted to marry a beautiful girl.
 - He wanted to have great furniture.
- Which room has a very large clock? ...
 - The blue room.
 - The black room.
 - The red room.
- What happened when the clock made a deep, strange, musical sound? ...
 - The musician was killed.
 - The dancers fell down onto the floor.
 - The whole party stopped.