BACKGROUNd INFO:

The Masque of the Red Death

Black Plague:

<http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/pfplague.htm>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jFACHNd_AWs&list=PL515C8D79ECA96119&index=6&feature=plpp_video>

Background:

Signs of impending death:

Varying reactions:

Breakdown of social order:

Mass Burials:

Seven Deadly Sins:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RUnll0QgnuE>

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

Seven Stages of Man:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ziXqEX6AwKA&feature=related>

*SEVEN STAGES OF MAN (from Shakespeare’s As You Like It)*

*Jacques:* All the world's a stage,  
And all the men and women merely players;  
They have their exits and their entrances,  
And one man in his time plays many parts,  
His acts being seven ages. At first, the infant, 1  
Mewling and [puking\*](http://internetshakespeare.uvic.ca/Library/SLT/life/lifesubj+1.html#puke) in the nurse's arms.  
Then the whining schoolboy, with his satchel 2  
And shining morning face, creeping like snail  
Unwillingly to school. And then the lover, 3  
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad  
Made to his mistress' eyebrow. Then a soldier, 4  
Full of strange oaths and [bearded like the pard\*](http://internetshakespeare.uvic.ca/Library/SLT/life/lifesubj+1.html#x1),  
Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel,  
Seeking the bubble reputation  
Even in the canon's mouth. And then the justice, 5  
In fair round belly with good [capon\*](http://internetshakespeare.uvic.ca/Library/SLT/life/lifesubj+1.html#x1) lined,  
With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,  
Full of [wise saws\*](http://internetshakespeare.uvic.ca/Library/SLT/life/lifesubj+1.html#x1) and modern instances;  
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts  
Into the lean and slippered [pantaloon\*](http://internetshakespeare.uvic.ca/Library/SLT/life/lifesubj+1.html#x1) 6  
With spectacles on nose and pouch on side;  
His youthful hose, well saved, a world too wide  
For his shrunk shank, and his big manly voice,  
Turning again toward childish treble, pipes  
And whistles in [his\*](http://internetshakespeare.uvic.ca/Library/SLT/life/lifesubj+1.html#x1) sound. Last scene of all, 7  
That ends this strange eventful history,  
Is second childishness and mere oblivion,  
[Sans\*](http://internetshakespeare.uvic.ca/Library/SLT/life/lifesubj+1.html#x1) teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.  
(*As You Like It*, 2. 7. 139-167)

The Masque of the Red Death

Smart Board Presentation Notes:

What is a symbol?

What is an allegory?

What are the 7 stages of man?

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What are the 7 deadly sins?

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What is the setting of this story?

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What are the colors of the rooms?

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Seven

Stages

Deadly

Sins

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Color

Sym-

Bolizes

Other Symbols:

The Ebony Clock

Tripods and the flames

Prince Prospero

The outside

Inside the abbey

The Visitor/Red Death

East and West

Lesson Plans:

Day 1

1. Introduce students the Bubonic Plague/Black death by using the attached YouTube videos.
2. Break students into 6 different groups. Take the eye witness document (link on first page) and cut into sections.
3. Then pass out the Eyewitness account document (primary source) – one section for each group. Tell them them need to become “experts” on their section.
4. Have the group choose one group leader. Explain to them that they are going to be “speed dating.” Each group leader will move to a different group when you “ring” the bell. The group leader will spend about one minute with that group, giving them the information they don’t have. That group will ALSO share their info with the leader. However, the leader is ONLY to give out their own expert information.
5. After the group leaders visit each group, they should report back to their original group and check to make sure they have all background info on the Black Death
6. Explain to students that it is assumed that Poe based his Red Death story on the background of the Black Death.
7. Now, give the students a brief synopsis of the story, explaining that Prince Prospero was isolating himself and his friends. Outline the abbey and that it had 7 rooms. Tell the students that the 7 rooms had seven colors.
8. Explain that there are literary critics who say those rooms could represent the 7 deadly sins and the 7 ages of man. Using the handout and the Youtube videos listed on the handout, have the students write down what the 7 deadly sins and 7 ages of man are. Talk through them and make sure they understand.
9. The last 15 minutes of the class period I had students create their own masks. They can take them home to finish. The only requirement I gave was they should have eye holes. The rest was up to them. I provided a template and the paper, they did the rest.

Day 2

1. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UjrLFW0Y50I&feature=BFa&list=PL515C8D79ECA96119&lf=plpp_video>

You can either use the video above (it reads the entire story) to play while students are reading, you can have them read silently, or in partners. You may even want to read it out loud to them. Give them a blank sheet of paper, and as they are listening/reading, draw what they imagine.

1. After reading, there is a GREAT Smartboard Notebook presentation on the Smart Exchange of The Masque of the Red Death. Here is the link: <http://exchange.smarttech.com/details.html?id=e8a3aa18-cae5-47bb-982b-c2664aacc474>

I have created a handout to be used with this presentation. After the students have read, go over symbol and allegory. Revisit the seven deadly sins and seven stages of man. Then walk through the setting and the different rooms. Talk about color symbolism and line up the stages, sins and color with the rooms. It is all outlined in the Smart presentation.

Day 3

OPTIONAL

1. Have students wear their masks and divide the story into parts/groups. Have each group create a “tableaux” or photograph of that part of the story, thinking about what it might have looked like in that particular part of the story. Great way to use the masks, take pictures, and wrap up the lesson.